

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

DEPARTMENTAL REGULATION		Number: DR 1042- 138
Collaborative Forest Restoration Program Technical Advisory Panel	DATE:	MAY 04 2010
	OPI:	Forest Service

1 AUTHORITY

The charter for the Collaborative Forest Restoration Program Technical Advisory Panel (Panel) is hereby renewed pursuant to the Community Forest Restoration Act (Pub. L. No. 106-393, Section 606, Title VI) and the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended, 5 U.S.C., App. 2.

2 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

- a. The purpose of the Panel is to evaluate proposals for forest restoration grants and provide recommendations about the proposals that best meet the objectives of the Collaborative Forest Restoration Program.

3 DUTIES

- a. The Panel shall provide recommendations on a schedule to be established by the Panel Chair in conjunction with the Designated Federal Officer.
- b. The Panel's recommendations shall consider the proposed projects' effects on long-term management and provide recommendations regarding which proposals best meet the following objectives pursuant to Section 605 of the Act:
 - (1) Reduce the threat of large, high-intensity wildfires and the negative effects of excessive competition between trees by restoring ecosystem functions, structures, and species composition, including the reduction of nonnative species populations;
 - (2) Reestablish fire regimes approximating those that shaped forest ecosystems prior to fire suppression;
 - (3) Preserve old and large trees;

- (4) Replant trees in deforested areas if they exist in the proposed project area;
 - (5) Improve the use of, or add value to, small diameter trees;
 - (6) Comply with all Federal and State environmental laws;
 - (7) Incorporate current scientific forest restoration information;
 - (8) Include a multiparty assessment to identify both the existing ecological condition of the proposed project area and the desired future condition;
 - (9) Contain a plan for reporting, upon project completion, on the positive or negative impact and effectiveness of the project including improvements in local management skills and on-the-ground results;
 - (10) Create local employment or training opportunities within the context of accomplishing restoration objectives including summer youth jobs programs such as the Youth Conservation Corps where appropriate;
 - (11) Not exceed 4 years in length;
 - (12) Not exceed a total annual cost of \$150,000 per project, with the Federal portion not exceeding \$120,000 annually per project nor exceed a total cost of \$450,000 for each project, with the Federal portion of the total cost not exceeding \$360,000 per project;
 - (13) Leverage Federal funding through in-kind or matching contributions; and
 - (14) Include an agreement by program grantees to attend an annual workshop with other stakeholders for the purpose of discussing the cooperative forest restoration program and projects implemented under the program.
- c. In developing their recommendations, the Panel shall seek to use a consensus-based decision-making process.

4 AGENCY or OFFICIAL TO WHOM THE PANEL REPORTS

The Technical Advisory Panel reports to the Secretary of Agriculture acting through the Chief of the Forest Service (the Chief).

5 SUPPORT

Clerical and other administrative support for the Panel will be provided by the Forest Service.

6 ESTIMATED ANNUAL OPERATIONS COSTS/STAFF YEARS

Estimated annual operating costs of the Committee are \$102,000. Federal staff support is estimated to be 0.5 FTE. Advisory Panel Expenses will be covered through the Collaborative Forest Restoration Program.

7 DESIGNATED FEDERAL OFFICER

The Regional Forester of the Southwestern Region, USDA Forest Service shall serve as the Designated Federal Official (DFO). In that capacity, the DFO (who is a permanent full-time or part-time employee, appointed in accordance with agency procedures) will coordinate the efforts of the Panel to make recommendations regarding proposals that are most suitable for funding, along with recommendations for funding levels.

The DFO (or alternate DFO) will also:

- (1) Approve or call all of the advisory committee's and subcommittees' meetings;
- (2) Prepare and approve all meeting agendas;
- (3) Attend all committee and subcommittee meetings;
- (4) Adjourn any meeting when he or she determines adjournment to be in the public interest; and
- (5) Chair meetings when directed to do so by the Chief of the Forest Service.

The DFO shall appoint an Assistant Designated Federal Officer (ADFO) under Sections 10 (e) and (f) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act who will assist the DFO to coordinate the activities of the Panel.

8 ESTIMATED NUMBER AND FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

The Panel will meet as often as is necessary to complete its business. A majority of the Panel members must be present to constitute an official meeting of the Panel. The Panel shall not hold any meetings except at the call of, or with the advance approval of, the DFO (or alternate DFO).

9 DURATION AND TERMINATION

- a. In accordance with Departmental regulations the Panel duration is

designated as continuing.

- b. This charter will expire 2 years from the date of filing unless renewed by proper authority and appropriate action.

10 MEMBERSHIP AND DESIGNATION

- a. The Panel will consist of 12 to 15 Representative and Federal members who are nominated by the DFO and approved by the Secretary in the following categories:
 - (1) A State natural resources official from the State of New Mexico;
 - (2) At least two representatives from Federal land management agencies;
 - (3) At least one tribal or pueblo representative;
 - (4) At least two independent scientists with experience in forest ecosystem restoration; and
 - (5) Equal representation from—
 - (a) Conservation interests,
 - (b) Local communities, and
 - (c) Commodity interests.
- b. Each Panel member shall serve as a representative of one of the interest groups described in Section 606 (b) of the Act. Appointment to the Panel does not make Panel members Federal government employees.
- c. Members of the Panel shall be appointed for terms of 2 years, but may be reappointed.
- d. The DFO, in nominating Panel members, shall seek to ensure the membership of the Panel is balanced and represents and includes a broad range of diverse views and interests.
- e. Members of the Panel serve without compensation. Reimbursement for travel expenses will be made in accordance with Federal per diem rates for attendance at meetings. All expenses will be subject to approval of the DFO.
- f. Equal opportunity practices, in line with USDA policies, will be followed in all appointments to the Panel. To ensure that the recommendations of the Panel have taken into account the needs of the diverse groups served by the Department, membership should include, to the extent practicable,

individuals with demonstrated ability to represent minorities, women, and persons with disabilities.

11 SUBCOMMITTEES

The Panel may create and operate subcommittees or working groups recommended by its members and approved by the DFO. If appropriate, these working groups or subcommittees may include representatives of nongovernmental organizations that have an interest in the implementation of the Act. Subcommittees and working groups will report to the Panel and must not provide advice or work products directly to the agency.

12 RECORDKEEPING

The records for the Collaborative Forest Restoration Program Technical Panel shall be handled in accordance with General Records Schedule 26, Item 2 or other approved agency records disposition schedule. These records shall be available for public inspection and copying, subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552.